

REMARKS

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for considering the present application. In the final Office Action dated August 31, 2009, claims 1-26 are pending in the application. Claims 1-4 and 25-26 have been amended. Claims 14-24 have been cancelled. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the rejections.

TERMINAL DISCLAIMER

In the Final Rejection dated August 31, 2009, the Examiner stated that the Terminal Disclaimer filed November 29, 2007 had not been approved for the reason that the attorney was not of record, and that a new Terminal Disclaimer should be filed. Applicants submitted a new Terminal Disclaimer on October 30, 2009, signed by Todd N. Snyder, an attorney of record, and this Terminal Disclaimer was approved November 19, 2009.

MINOR, NON-NARROWING CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Minor, non-narrowing amendments have been made to claims 1-4, and 25-26 for claim consistency and/or to correct grammatical errors.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 14, 18 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bella (U.S. Pat. No. 5,765,098) in view of Sherman (U.S. Pat. No. 5,966,371) and further in view of Tanaka et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,157,685). Claims 15-17, 19 and 21-24 stand rejected as being unpatentable over Bella in view of Sherman and further in view of Tanaka et al. and Baier et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,519,477). To further the present application toward allowance, Applicants have canceled claims 14-24 without prejudice, rendering the Examiner's rejections moot. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute the canceled claims in another application (e.g., a continuation).

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the allowance of claims 1-13 and 25-26.

CONCLUSION

In light of the above, Applicants submit that all rejections are now overcome. The application is now in condition for allowance and expeditious notice thereof is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner have any questions or comments which would place the application in better condition for allowance, he is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Should any fees be associated with this submission, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-0383; or, credit any over payment to this account.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: November 30, 2009

By: 
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